(b) to (d) The News item carried the ruling given by the Supreme Court in an appeal filed on behalf of a foreign shipowner, that Indian Courts did not have any jurisdiction under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 to entertain and try suits for damages in case of a collision between two foreign-owned vessels, outside the territorial waters of India. The news item did not report any actionable observations for the Government.

Construction of Bypass on NH-4

815. SHRI RAVI SITARAM NAIK : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have acquired the land to construct a bypass at Mardol in North Goa on the National Highway No. 4;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the construction project has been included in the Annual Plan for 1998-99;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Details of acquisition of land are as under :

Sr. No.	Date	Area of land acquired
1.	11.11.91	94,226 sqr. Mts.
2.	29.8.97	3,750 sqr. Mts.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise

(e) This work has relatively a low priority in comparison with works included in the 1998-99 Plan keeping in view the limited funds available for development of National Highways.

[Translation]

Changes in Status of Allahabad University

816. SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Uttar Pradesh Government has sent any proposal to declare Allahabad University as a Control University;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be declared as a Central University;

(c) whether any scheme is under consideration of the Government for the development of Allahabad University; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) There has been no recent proposal from the Government of Uttar Pradesh to declare Allahabad University as a Central University. An earlier proposal, mooted by the Allahabad University Teachers' Association in July 1990, and subsequently supported by the Government of U.P. in April 1991, could not be operationalised.

(c) and (d) The various development schemes for Universities are under the purview of UGC, which administers and monitors these schemes.

[English]

Swindling by Egyptian Contactor

817. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Shipping Corporation of India has asked the Indian High Commission in Egypt to help it to reclaim from an Egyptian contractor, nearly seven lakh dollars paid by it for the removal of rubbish/sludge at Port Suez through the fake bills;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for which the Shipping Corporation of India kept on accepting the bills from the Egyptian Contractor for many years;

(d) whether some officials of the Shipping Corporation of India are also involved in this fraud; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard and action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Shipping Corporation of India Limited (SCI) informed the Indian Embassy at Cairo about the details of the loss of about Rs. 2.40 Crores suffered by SCI for payments made by their Port Said agents to an Egyptian Contactor for removal of rubbish from SCI's vessels transiting through Suez canal. The contractor had been submitting forged 'work done' Certificates. SCI stopped paying such bills as soon as this forgery was detected.

SCI have requested the Indian Embassy at Cairo to help them in recovering this amount.

(d) and (e) The matter is being investigated by Shipping Corporation of India and Ministry of Surface Transport and no conclusion has yet been reached.